

# ICPS newsletter

## Ukraine's European integration process must be institutionalised

***The Ministry of Economy and European Integration of Ukraine has launched a series of public hearings on European integration issues throughout Ukraine, in order to raise public awareness on issues concerning European institutions and integration processes. Under the framework of this project, the International Centre for Policy Studies is conducting opinion polls among the participants of the hearings, in order to identify the level of awareness on integrational processes in Ukraine, as well as sound opinions on the impact of the EU enlargement eastwards on Ukraine. During the hearings held in Kherson, Olga Shumylo, Manager of the "Ukraine's European Choice" program at the International Centre for Policy Studies, delivered a presentation on "Institutionalisation of the European Integration Process"; a summary of this speech is given below***

Institutionalisation of the European integration process entails the establishment and functioning of a network of special institutions, whose functions are to devise, implement, monitor, and assess national policy on integration with the EU. Chiefly, when speaking of integration processes in Ukraine, the political factor is implied, which depends not only on the political willpower of the Ukrainian government, but also on the desire and commitment of the European side to cooperate more closely.

Since integration processes are primarily an issue of domestic policy, whose implementation would allow achieving the level of European standards in all spheres of public life, we propose to treat European integration as a two-stage technical process.

In the **first stage**, the institutional framework of the system of management and coordination of Ukraine's European integration policy will be enhanced. Pursuant to a Decree of the Presidential of Ukraine dated 30 August 2002 (No. 791), the State Council on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration was created to ensure Ukraine's entry to the European political, economic, security, and legal environment, and the more effective coordination of and control over the activities of government bodies in the area of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

In order to start negotiations with the European Union concerning Ukraine's becoming an associate member, the objectives set before Ukraine in 1994, following the conclusion of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, should be achieved. In order to ensure the successful implementation of these objectives, a Technical Schedule for the execution of the

Agreement should be devised, identifying priority tasks, deadlines, responsible institutions, and the funds required to attain these objectives.

In fact, CEE countries which are associate members and are preparing for accession have similar documents as a basis for implementing national policy. It contains 31 sections, which accord with the 31 sections into which the *Acquis Communautaire* is divided. A transparent and competently planned Technical Schedule allows the institutions responsible for monitoring the execution of the objectives to track progress.

The **second stage** entails the introduction of new procedures and standards for planning, coordination, monitoring, assessment, reporting, and negotiations with the European Union. We need to adopt the experience of CEE countries that have already gone through this process in order to introduce new standards and procedures in the work of Ukrainian institutions working on the European integration process.

This stage is characterised by the refocusing of technical assistance for Ukraine on developing the government's institutional capacity (via twinning) and on infrastructure development. Technical assistance for CEE countries is targeted at developing institutions and infrastructure, in order to gear up the countries for membership.

EU candidate countries receive it in the form of training and close cooperation of the government institutions of the accession countries with corresponding ministries of EU member countries. This form of technical assistance is called twinning.

The technical assistance to Ukraine lacked such an objective. It was granted largely in

the form of advice and recommendations prepared by foreign experts. However, according to the EC Commissioner for Enlargement Gunter Verheugen, twinning acts as the main mechanism to ensure a successful process of institutional development. The 2000 report on the status of integration of candidate countries to the EU shows that strengthening administrative capacity remains the key objective on the way to EU accession.

Twinning is a unique instrument which helps to make effective use of the expert knowledge of civil servants from EU member countries in order to help accession countries. It provides the training mechanism and guides the development and implementation of projects which are results-oriented and aimed at achieving defined priorities.

Despite the fact that the EU has declined to provide this particular kind of technical assistance to Ukraine and to work with it as with candidate countries, we have no other choice for achieving our goal—successful reforms—than to introduce new standards and procedures, using the experience of Central and Eastern European countries. ■

*Public hearings on regional problems of European integration took place in Kherson on 26 September 2002. The goal of this project of the Ministry of Economy and European Integration of Ukraine is to disseminate information about Ukraine's European integration process and to commence public discussions of problems associated with this process, its impact on the Ukrainian economy and on social and political spheres of life at regional and local levels. The public hearings will take place in the following six oblast centres: Kharkiv, Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk, Lviv, Ternopil, and Chernihiv.*

*Results of the opinion poll among participants of the public hearings, conducted by the International Centre for Policy Studies and financially supported by Freedom House, will be made public in the ICPS Newsletter in November 2002.*

*If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact Olga Shumylo, Manager of "Ukraine's European Choice" program, via e-mail: oshumylo@icps.kiev.ua or by tel.: (38-044) 236-4477.*

# Without reforms, international assistance will not achieve its potential

*The International Centre for Policy Studies is preparing a new issue of the Russian-language version of the Local Government Brief for publication, as commissioned by the Open Society Institute's "Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative" (LGI) Program. In this issue of the bulletin, problems of external assistance to CEE and FSU countries are examined*

In the more than ten years of transformations, international donors have spent a sizable amount of resources (both material and human) to support reforms and development in countries with transitional economies. This assistance has been allotted to a variety of projects, from European integration to energy saving, from resolving environmental problems to refugee aid. Beyond any doubt, these resources have had a dramatic impact on the development of recipient countries. However, the authors of articles presented in the *Local Government Brief* have ventured to assess critically the international assistance. While recognising the positive impact of the TA, its efficiency is questioned. These authors believe that new developments mean that the time has come to reform current and future technical assistance programs.

## EU assistance: bureaucratic flaws

Nowadays, the whole world is on the threshold of an unprecedented wave of integration—in the near future, the European Union is expected to enlarge eastwards, during which the population of this supranational entity will approximately double. The policy of the EU international assistance reflects these prospects, with a number of TA programs targeting the countries applying for the membership in the European Community.

The authors examine the situation concerning the TA extended by the EU to its recipients (primarily to accession countries and their neighbours). One of the criticisms has been about the excessive red tape accompanying processes of TA development and approval under the EU framework. This problem echoes the more general issue of reforming EU institutes and procedures, which was on the priority agenda of the Inter-governmental Summit in Nice (detailed information on this topic was published in the *Local Government Brief* for March 2001). In the upcoming

publication, one of the aspects of these problems is referred to as the "particular" attitude of European bureaucrats to decision making; they have no incentives to take risky or rapid decisions, because their criterion for career growth is number of years in service. This situation hinders technical assistance, which sometimes becomes outdated by the date of actual disbursement.

Another problem is the absence of centralised management of the EU's technical assistance. Until recently, technical assistance was administered by various EU institutions: general directorates and special-target organisations under the European framework. Not infrequently, their activities were uncoordinated, which was aggravated even further by the conflicts between different departments of European administrative authorities. Today, this situation should be settled by establishing a single European agency for TA coordination—EuropeAid.

## Other articles

Readers might also find of interest a number of articles analysing the conditions and problems of international assistance:

### • Assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This Baltic country with a difficult transformation history has a whole series of international TA projects, aimed at developing democracy and the economy in postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina. As is well known, after the Bosnian conflict the history of war conflicts in the Balkans acquired newer chapters. A requirement of the aid extended to the countries that suffered from new conflicts should be to evaluate the impact of international initiatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The bulletin furnishes recommendations regarding reforms to the Stability Pact, under the framework of which the lion's share of TA is allotted to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

• **Assistance to Central Asia.** Here, the author reviews international assistance channelled at resolving environmental

problems of the countries of Central Asia (problems of water supply and rational use of water resources top the priority list). He draws the conclusion that technical assistance extended by international agencies and foreign countries is not effective. Major problems include: (1) insufficient coordination of assistance initiatives; (2) the lack of a regional approach to resolving environmental problems; and (3) disregard by international assistance programs of local capacities, which are essential in settling problems in the region.

### • Possibilities of cooperation between non-governmental organisations and donors.

The author of this article is Kenneth Davie, a Supervisory Board member of the LGI program. He is certainly familiar with the inside operations of international donor organisations, for he has worked on many international technical assistance projects. He offers useful recommendations regarding cooperation with international donors to interested readers, and contemplates the possibilities for better cooperation of NGOs with donors.

### • Situational analysis of foreign assistance: the example of Estonia.

The author of this article considers the international assistance extended to Estonia in the transformation period. Nowadays, it is quite apparent that this Baltic country has achieved noteworthy success on its reform path; presently, its development indicators are higher than in many Central European countries which were never part of the Soviet Union. The article scrutinises the objectives of international assistance programs for Estonia, and the author attempts to assess them, to single out the major problems, and to venture recommendations for boosting their effectiveness.

In the upcoming issue of the *Local Government Brief*, readers will also be able to find useful links to thematic Internet resources and to new publications on international technical assistance issues. ■

*If you wish to subscribe to the Russian-language version of the Local Government Brief bulletin published by ICPS, please fill in the subscription form on our web-site: [www.icps.kiev.ua/rus/subscription.html](http://www.icps.kiev.ua/rus/subscription.html)*

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